

(12) UK Patent Application (19) GB (11) 2 347 302 (13) A

(43) Date of A Publication 30.08.2000

(21) Application No 0004268.9

(22) Date of Filing 23.02.2000

(30) Priority Data

(31) 11045817 (32) 24.02.1999 (33) JP

(71) Applicant(s)

NEC Corporation
(Incorporated in Japan)
7-1 Shiba 5-chome, Minato-ku, Tokyo 108-01, Japan

(72) Inventor(s)

Nozomi Toki

(74) Agent and/or Address for Service

Mathys & Squire
100 Grays Inn Road, LONDON, WC1X 8AL,
United Kingdom

(51) INT CL⁷

H04M 1/02

(52) UK CL (Edition R)

H4J JK

(56) Documents Cited

GB 2293518 A

(58) Field of Search

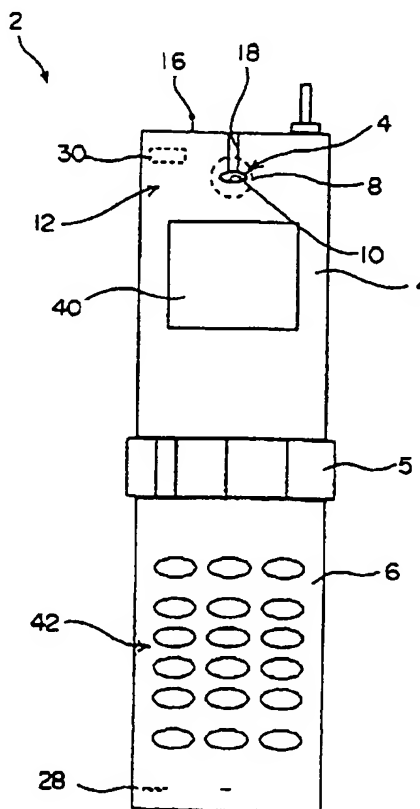
UK CL (Edition R) H4J JK
INT CL⁷ H04B 1/08 1/38 , H04M 1/02 1/03

(54) Abstract Title

Foldable handy phone with combined call alert and sounding means

(57) A foldable handy phone 2 of the present invention includes a receiver case 4 and a transmitter case 6 hinged together via member 5. A piezoelectric device or similar sounding means 8 is accommodated in the receiver case 4. A through hole 10 is formed in the surface of the receiver case that faces the transmitter case when the handy phone is folded up. The through hole 10 is communicated to a portion accommodating the sounding means 8. A groove 18 is formed in the above surface of the receiver case and extends from the open end of the through hole to the end of the receiver case 16 opposite to the end hinged to the transmitter case. When the sounding means produces an alert tone in the folded position of the handy phone, the alert tone is radiated to the outside via the groove 18. In another embodiment, instead of forming a groove in the surface of the receiver case another through hole is made (Fig. 5, 36).

FIG. 1



GB 2 347 302 A

FIG. 1

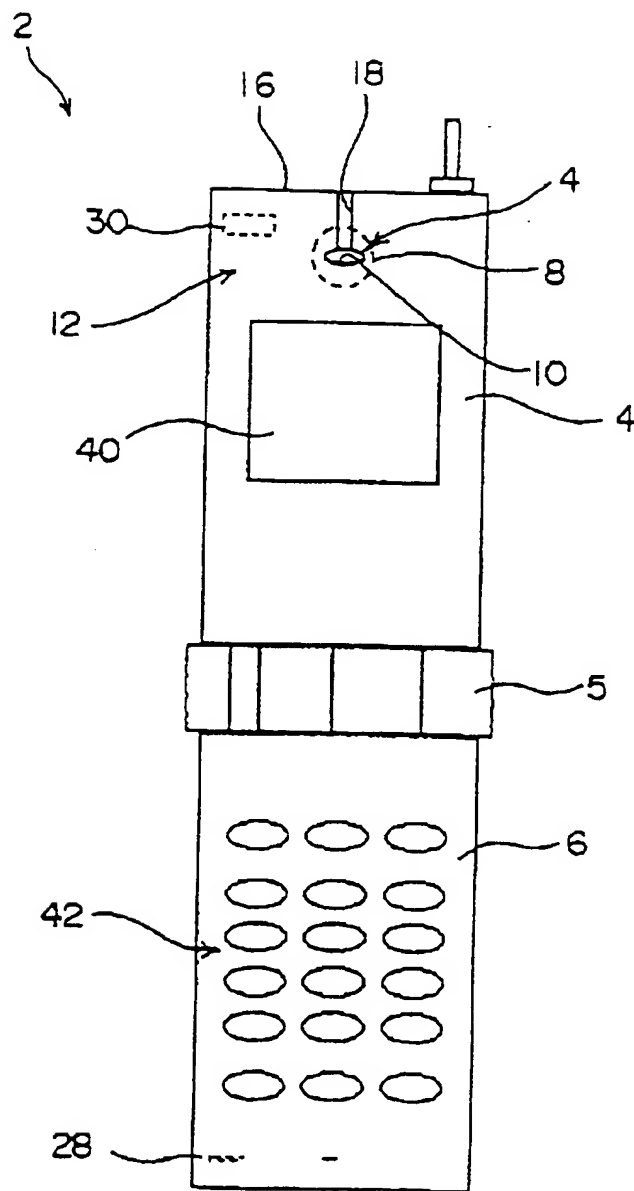


FIG. 2

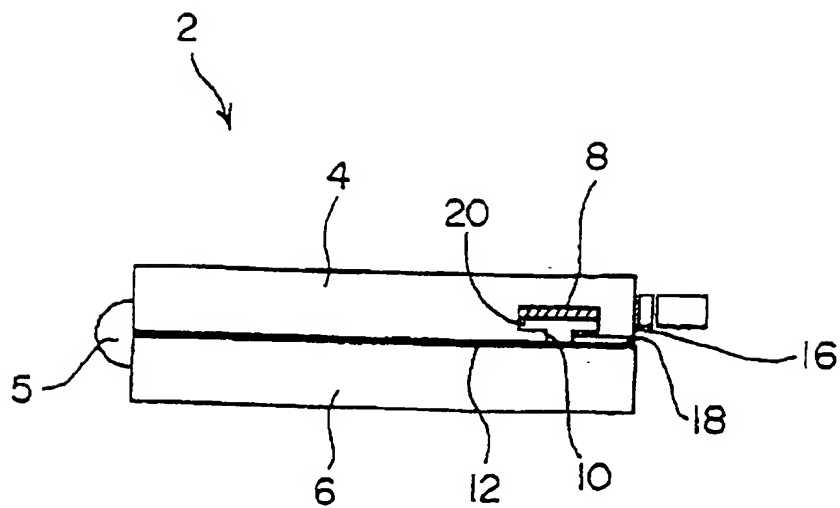


FIG. 3

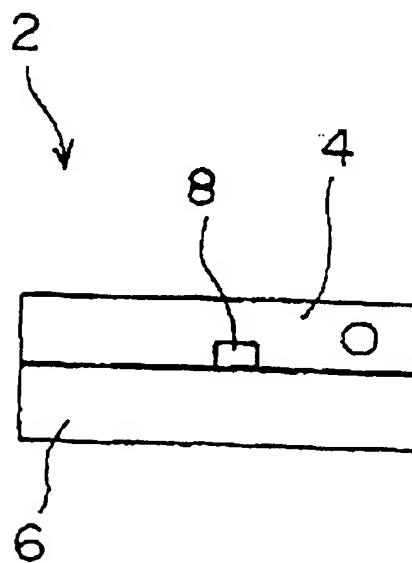


FIG. 4

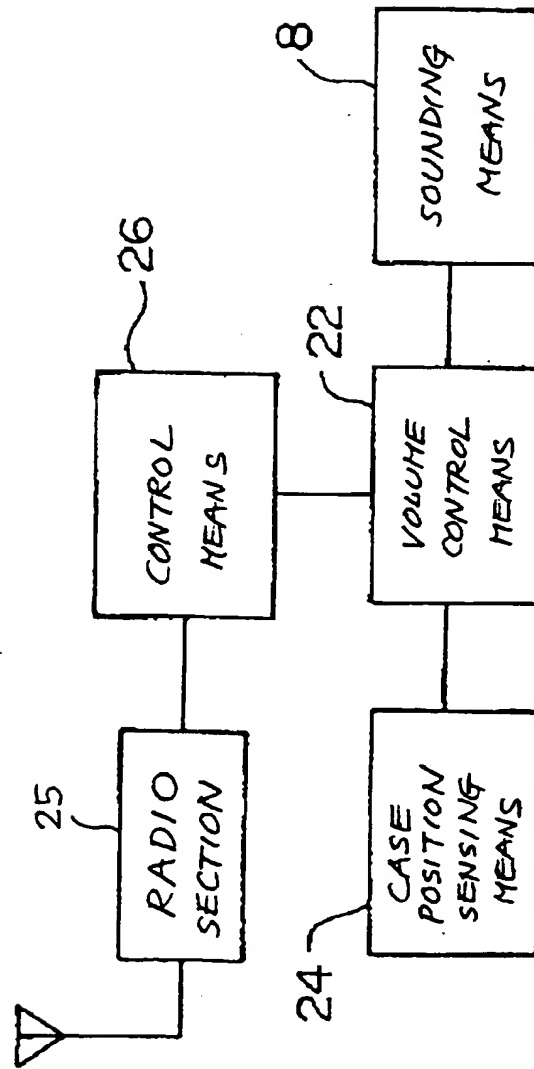


FIG. 5

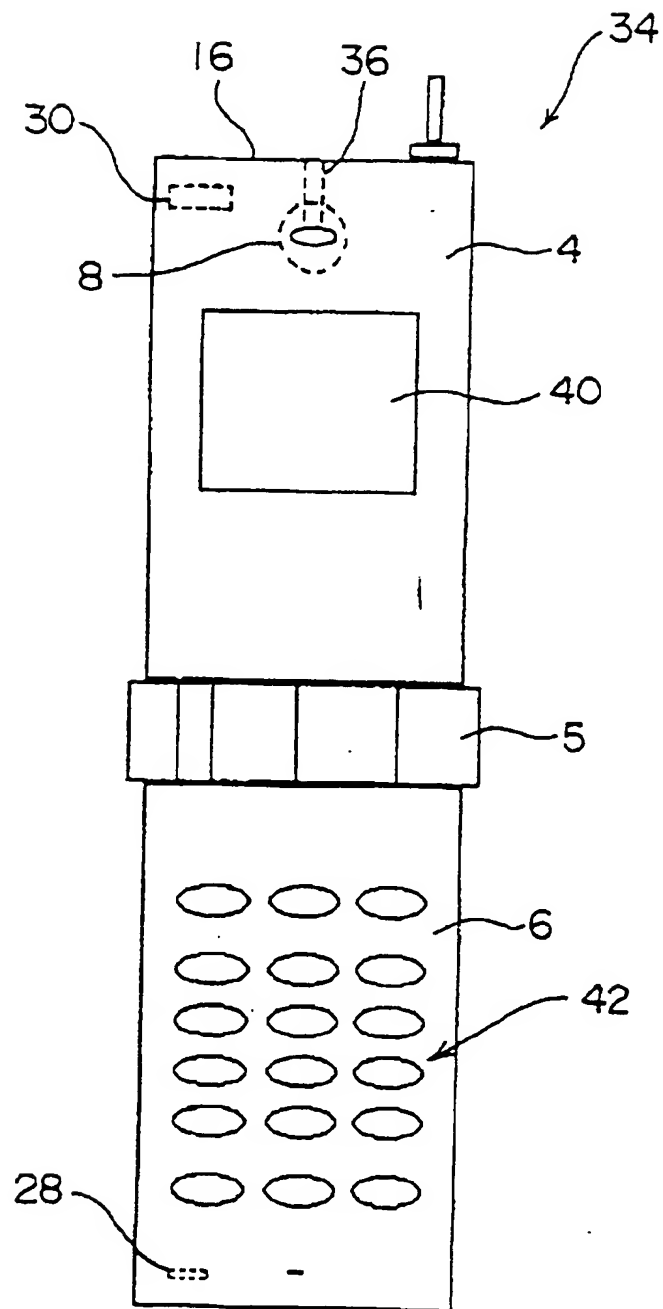


FIG. 6

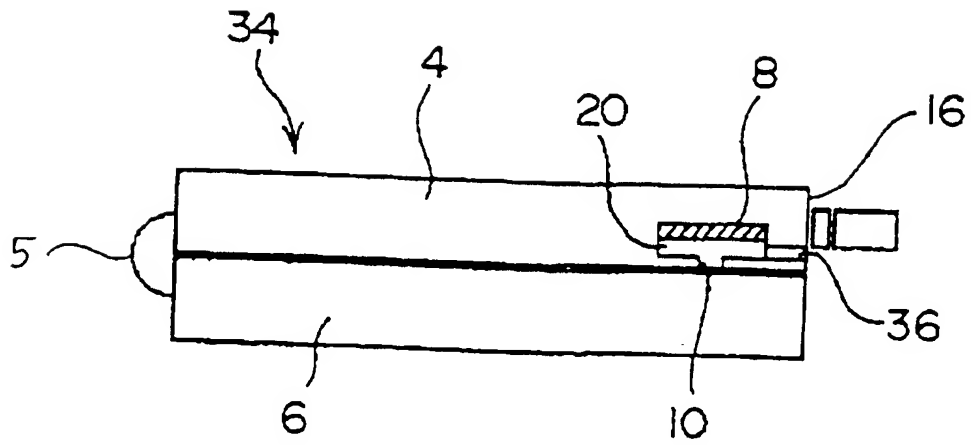
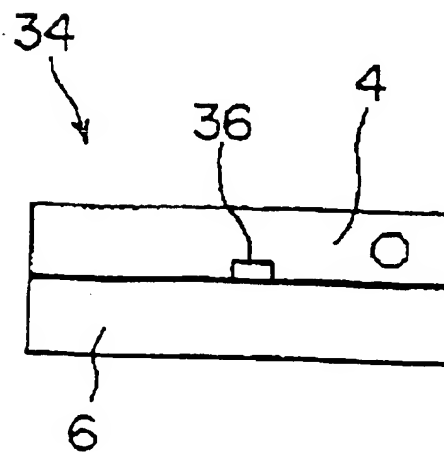


FIG. 7



FOLDABLE HANDY PHONE

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

5 The present invention relates to a foldable handy phone ie. one having case parts which can be opened and closed relative to each other, through being hinged together or otherwise.

It is a common practice with a foldable handy phone to hinge a receiver case and a transmitter case to each other. The receiver case accommodates a speaker or similar sounding means. A through hole is formed in the surface of the receiver case that faces the transmitter case when the handy phone is folded up. The through hole is communicated to the portion of the receiver case accommodating the sounding means.

10 The use of the above handy phone holds the open end of the through hole or earpiece portion to the ear in order to hear voice output from the sounding means. The maximum sound pressure level (SPL) to be output from the sounding means confined in a hermetic space is limited to about 120 dB or below in order to protect the ear drum from damage. It has been customary to dispose a ringer in either one of the receiver case and transmitter case independently of the sounding means. In the event of a call incoming, the ringer is driven to generate an alert tone for alerting the user to the call.

20 However, the handy phone equipped with the ringer in addition to the sounding means is large size, heavy weight, and high cost. In

light of this, a sensor may be built in the earpiece portion for sensing the distance between the ear and the earpiece portion, so that the sounding means can output an alert tone with a greater volume when the above distance is great, as proposed in the past. Alternatively, 5 the sounding means may function as a speaker at the same time to allow the user to converse without bringing the handy-phone closer to the ear, as also proposed in the past.

A clearance more or less exists between the earpiece portion and the ear. The size of the clearance depends on the person, i.e., 10 the shape of the ear and how tightly the earpiece contacts the ear. As the clearance and therefore the degree of sound leak increases, sound pressure in the low pitch range falls due to the variation of the acoustic characteristic, resulting in the noticeable variation of sound quality.

15 Japanese Patent Laid-Open Publication No. 10-304036, for example, teaches a preleak portion for reducing the above variation of sound quality and always implementing sound easy to hear for all persons. The preleak portion is provided in the earpiece portion for adequately causing sound to leak beforehand. With the preleak 20 portion, it is possible to reduce the influence of the distance between the earpiece portion and the ear.

The sounding means assigned to conversation, but bifunctioning as alert tone generating means, obviates the need for a ringer. This kind of sounding means, however, must be accompanied 25 by the sensor responsive to the distance between the earpiece portion

and the ear, increasing the size, weight and cost of the handy phone.

The preleak scheme successfully reduces the variation of sound quality by causing sound to leak beforehand. However, some structure should preferably serve as the preleak portion at the same time in
5 order to obviate the need for the preleak portion.

Technologies relating to the present invention are also disclosed in, e.g., Japanese Patent Laid-Open Publication No. 3-162025 and Japanese Patent No. 2,570,149.

10

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

It is therefore an object of the preferred embodiments of the present invention to provide a small size, light weight and low cost foldable handy phone.

It is another such object to provide a
foldable handy phone including sounding means for conversation
15 capable of bifunctioning as a ringer.

It is a further such object to provide a
foldable handy phone causing sound to adequately leak and thereby
stabilizing sound quality.

A foldable handy phone of the present invention includes a
20 receiver case, a transmitter case hinged at one end thereof to one
end of the receiver case, and a sounding device disposed in the
receiver case. A through hole is formed in the surface of the
receiver case that faces the transmitter case when the receiver case
and transmitter case are folded. The through hole is communicated
25 to a portion accommodating the sounding device. A groove is formed

in the surface of the receiver case and extends from the open end of the through hole to the other end of the receiver case.

5 The above groove may be replaced with a second through hole also formed in the receiver case and extending from the portion accommodating the sounding device to the other end of the receiver case.

In another aspect the invention provides a handy phone comprising:

a first case;

10 a second case connected to said first case so that the cases may be moved relative to each other between open and closed positions;

sounding means disposed in said first case;

a through hole formed in a surface of said first case which faces said second case when said first case and said second case are closed, said through hole communicating with a portion accommodating said sounding means; and

15 a conduit formed in said first case and extending from said through hole to a surface of said first case other than that in which the through hole is formed.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

The above and other objects, features and advantages of a preferred embodiment will become more apparent from the following detailed description taken 20 with the accompanying drawings in which:

FIG. 1 is a plan view showing a foldable handy phone embodying the present invention;

FIG. 2 is a side elevation showing the illustrative embodiment in a folded position;

25 FIG. 3 is a side elevation as seen in a different direction from FIG. 2, also showing the illustrative embodiment in the folded position;

FIG. 4 is a block diagram schematically showing essential part of the illustrative embodiment;

FIG. 5 is a plan view showing an alternative embodiment of the present 30 invention;

FIG. 6 is a side elevation showing the alternative embodiment in a folded position; and

FIG. 7 is a side elevation as seen in a different direction

from FIG. 6, also showing the alternative embodiment in the folded position.

DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENTS

5 Referring to FIG. 1 of the drawings, a foldable handy phone embodying the present invention is shown and generally designated by the reference numeral 2. As shown, the handy phone 2 includes a receiver case 4 and a transmitter case 6 having end portions thereof hinged to each other by a connecting member 5. An LDC (Liquid Crystal
10 Display) 40 is mounted on the receiver case 4. An operating section 42 including a plurality of keys is arranged on the transmitter case 6. Sounding means 8 is disposed in the receiver case 4 and implemented by a piezoelectric device by way of example. A through hole 10 is formed in the surface 12 of the receiver case 4 which faces
15 the transmitter case 6 when the handy phone 2 is folded up. The through hole 10 is communicated to a portion accommodating the sounding means 8.

A groove 18 is formed in the above surface 12 of the receiver case 4 and extends from the open end 14 of the through hole 14 to the
20 end 16 of the receiver case 4 opposite to the hinged end. The groove 18 is open to the outside at the end 16 of the receiver case 4. A bore 20 (see FIG. 2) is formed in the receiver case 4 between the front face of the sounding means 8 and the surface 12 of the receiver case 4. The bore 20 is contiguous with the through hole 10.

25 FIG. 4 shows a sound volume control device arranged within the

handy phone 2. As shown, the control device includes volume control means 22 for controlling the volume of sound to be output from the sounding means 8. Case position sensing means 24 determines whether or not the receiver case 4 and transmitter case 6 are folded up. When
5 the receiver case 4 and transmitter case 6 are folded up, as determined by the case position sensing means 24, the volume control means 22 causes the sounding means 8 to output louder sound than when the two cases 4 and 6 are unfolded. Control means 26 includes a CPU (Central Processing Unit) and a ROM (Read Only Memory), not shown, and controls
10 the entire handy phone 2.

As shown in FIG. 1, the case position sensing means 24 is made up of a reed switch 28 and a magnet 30 accommodated in the transmitter case 6 and receiver case 4, respectively. The reed switch 28 and magnet 30 face each other when the receiver case 4 and transmitter
15 case 6 are folded. The reed switch 28 turns on when a magnetic field acts thereon.

FIGS. 2 and 3 show the handy phone 2 in a folded position or stand-by position. In this position, the receiver case 4 and transmitter case 6 and therefore the reed switch 28 and magnet 30
20 accommodated therein face each other. The reed switch 28 therefore remains in an ON state due to the magnetic field of the magnet 30.

Assume that a call meant for the handy phone 2 is received via an antenna and a radio section 25 shown in FIG. 4. Then, the control means 26 informed of the call by the radio section 25 generates an
25 alert tone signal and delivers it to the sounding means 8 via the

volume control means 22. At this instant, the volume control means 22 has determined that the handy phone 2 is folded in response to the output of the reed switch 28. The volume control means 22 therefore controls the sounding means 8 to output louder sound than when the
5 handy phone 2 is unfolded. As a result, the sounding means 8 is driven by an alert tone signal output from the volume control means 22 and generates a louder alert tone.

The alert tone is radiated from the end 16 of the receiver case 4 to the outside of the case 4 via the bore 20, through hole 10 and
10 groove 18. This allows the user of the handy phone 2 to easily hear such a loud alert tone despite the folded position of the phone 2 and see the receipt of a call.

So long as the handy phone 2 is folded up, conversation cannot be held on the phone 2. This, coupled with the fact that in such a
15 condition the user does not hold the receiver case 4 to the ear, allows an alert tone with a sound pressure level (SPL) of 120 dB or above to be safely produced.

The illustrative embodiment is practicable with the case position sensing means, i. e., reed switch 28 and magnet 30 customarily
20 arranged in a conventional handy phone. The sounding means 8 can therefore serve as a ringer at the same time and obviates the need for the conventional sensor for sensing the distance between the user's ear and an earpiece. This reduces the overall size, weight and cost of the handy phone 2.

25 On hearing the above alert tone, the user unfolds the handy

phone 2 and then holds an earpiece portion 32 including the through hole 2 to the ear.

Even when the user puts the earpiece 32 tightly on the ear, the open end of the groove 18 allows sound to leak via the groove 18. In this sense, the groove 18 plays the role of a preleak portion. Consequently, although the user may vary the distance between the ear and the earpiece portion 32, sound quality changes little and remains stable.

An alternative embodiment of the present invention will be described with reference to FIG. 5. In the figures, identical reference numerals designate identical structural elements. As shown, a foldable handy phone 34 is identical with the previous handy phone 2 except that a second through hole 36 is substituted for the groove 18. The second through hole 36 is formed in the receiver case 4 and extends from the bore 20 (see FIG. 6) to the end 16 of the case 4 opposite to the hinged end in the same manner as the groove 18. With the second through bore 36 comparable in function with the groove 18, the illustrative embodiment achieves the same advantages as the previous embodiment.

In the embodiments shown and described, the sounding means 8 expected to output an alert tone may additionally function as a speaker in the folded position of the handy phone 2 or 34. This configuration will allow the user to hear voice without bringing the handy phone 2 or 34 closer to the ear.

In summary, it will be seen that the present invention provides

a foldable handy phone allowing sounding means to output a louder alert tone when it is held in a folded position. Such an alert tone is radiated to the outside via a groove or a through hole formed in a receiver case, alerting the user of the handy phone to a call
5 incoming. Because conversation cannot be held on the folded handy phone 2 and because the user is not expected to hold the folded handy phone to the ear, an alert tone with an SPL of 120 dB or above can be safely produced.

Further, the folded position of the handy phone can be sensed
10 by a mechanism customarily included in a conventional foldable handy phone, obviating the need for an exclusive sensor responsive to the distance between the phone and the user's ear. Also, by providing sounding means with an additional ringer function, it is possible to reduce the size, weight and cost of the handy phone.

15 Moreover, even when the user puts the receiver case tightly on the ear, the open end of the groove or the through hole allows sound to leak. Consequently, although the user may vary the distance between the ear and the receiver case, sound quality changes little and remains stable.

20 Various modifications will become possible for those skilled in the art after receiving the teachings of the present disclosure without departing from the scope thereof.

Each feature disclosed in this specification (which term includes the claims) and/or shown in the drawings may be incorporated in the invention independently of other disclosed and/or illustrated features.

5 Statements in this specification of the "objects of the invention" relate to preferred embodiments of the invention, but not necessarily to all embodiments of the invention falling within the claims.

The description of the invention with reference to the drawings is by way of example only.

10 The text of the abstract filed herewith is repeated here as part of the specification.

A foldable handy phone of the present invention includes a receiver case and a transmitter case hinged to each other. A piezoelectric device or similar sounding means is accommodated in the receiver case. A through hole is formed in the surface of the receiver case that faces the transmitter case when the handy phone is folded up.
15 The through hole is communicated to a portion accommodating the sounding means. A groove is formed in the above surface of the receiver case and extends from the open end of the through hole to the end of the receiver case opposite to the end hinged to the transmitter case. When the sounding means produces an alert tone in the folded
20 position of the handy phone, the alert tone is radiated to the outside via the groove.

Claims

1. A handy phone comprising:
 - a first case;
 - a second case connected to said first case so that the cases may be moved relative to each other between open and closed positions;
 - 5 sounding means disposed in said first case;
 - a through hole formed in a surface of said first case which faces said second case when said first case and said second case are closed, said through hole being communicating with a portion accommodating said sounding means; and
 - a conduit formed in said first case and extending from said through hole to a
 - 10 surface of said first case other than that in which the through hole is formed.
2. A handy phone as claimed in claim 1 wherein the first case and the second case are hinged together at one end of the first case, the surface to which the conduit extends being at the other end of the first case.
3. A handy phone as claimed in claim 1 or claim 2 wherein the conduit
- 15 is a bore or a groove in the first case.
4. A handy phone as claimed in claim 1, 2 or 3 wherein the first case is a receiver case and the second case is a transmitter case.
5. A foldable handy phone comprising:
 - a receiver case;
 - 20 a transmitter case hinged at one end thereof to one end of said receiver case;
 - sounding means disposed in said receiver case;
 - a through hole formed in a surface of said receiver case which faces said transmitter case when said receiver case and said transmitter case are folded, said through hole being communicated to a portion accommodating said sounding means;
 - 25 and

a groove formed in said surface of said receiver case and extending from an open end of said through hole to the other end of said receiver case.

5 6. A handy phone as claimed in claim 5, wherein an end of said groove is open at said other end of said receiver case.

7. A foldable handy phone comprising:
a receiver case;
a transmitter case hinged at one end thereof to one end of said receiver case;
sounding means disposed in said receiver case;
10 a first through hole formed in a surface of said receiver case which faces said transmitter case when said receiver case and said transmitter case are folded, said through hole being communicated to a portion accommodating said sounding means;
and
a second through hole formed in said receiver case and extending from said
15 portion accommodating said sounding means to the other end of said receiver case.

8. A handy phone as claimed in claim 7, wherein an end of said second through hole is open as said other end of said receiver case.

9. A handy phone as claimed in claim 6 or claim 8, further comprising
a bore formed between a front face of said sounding means and said surface of said
20 receiver case and communicated to said second through hole or said groove.

10. A handy phone as claimed in any preceding claim, further comprising:
volume control means for controlling a volume of sound to be output from
said sounding means; and
case position sensing means for determining whether or not said cases are
25 closed;
said volume control means causing, when said case position sensing means
determines that said receiver case and said transmitter case are folded, said sounding
means to produce a louder sound than when said cases are closed.

11. A handy phone as claimed in claim 10, wherein said case position sensing means comprises a reed switch and a magnet one of which is accommodated in one said case and the other of which is accommodated in the other said case, said
5 lead switch and said magnet adjoining each other when said cases are closed.

12. A handy phone substantially as herein described with reference to figures 1 to 4 or 5 to 7 of the accompanying drawings.



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

Application No: GB 0004268.9
Claims searched: 1-12

-14-

Examiner: Carol Ann McQueen
Date of search: 25 April 2000

Patents Act 1977
Search Report under Section 17

Databases searched:

UK Patent Office collections, including GB, EP, WO & US patent specifications, in:

UK Cl (Ed.R): H4J (JK)

Int Cl (Ed.7): H04B 1/08, 1/38, H04M 1/02, 1/03

Other: ONLINE: EPODOC, JAPIO, WPI

Documents considered to be relevant:

Category	Identity of document and relevant passage	Relevant to claims
A	GB 2293518 A (NEC)	

X	Document indicating lack of novelty or inventive step	A	Document indicating technological background and/or state of the art.
Y	Document indicating lack of inventive step if combined with one or more other documents of same category.	P	Document published on or after the declared priority date but before the filing date of this invention.
&	Member of the same patent family	E	Patent document published on or after, but with priority date earlier than, the filing date of this application.